

of Independence. Despite great success, however, he was continually at odds with his contemporaries and also himself. This personal struggle is perhaps best illustrated by the deeply affectionate yet strained long-distance relationship he maintained with his wife, Abigail, and the children that brought him pride as well as shame and heartache. Especially inspiring to young readers may be the revelation that poor scholastic achievement, evident by direct quotes that glaringly illustrate his paltry grasp of spelling and capitalization, didn't stop Adams from achieving some great things. —Roger Leslie

Otfinoski, Steve. *Bugsy Siegel and the Postwar Boom.* 2000. 112p. illus. index. Blackbirch, lib. ed., \$19.95 (1-56711-224-2). 364.1.

Gr. 7–10. It might seem that a book about mobster Siegel and the seedy underworld in which he lived would be little more than a glorification of bad behavior. But thanks to Otfinoski's formidable talents, that's not the case. What emerges here is the destructive folly of overblown ego, bad judgment, and alliances with characters whose loyalty

stretches only as far as the bottom dollar. Even better, Siegel's story is embedded in a larger historical context of the depression, World War II, and the postwar flight to suburbia. In sweeping but crystal-clear descriptions, Otfinoski provides a brief, solid view of mid-twentieth-century history that makes plain the mobsters' wayward thinking and activities. Shared in straightforward prose, the revelations of the destructive aftermath of each gangster's tenuous glory vividly verify that, in this arena, people reap exactly what they sow. —Roger Leslie

Revolutionary Voices: A Multicultural Queer Youth Anthology. Ed. by Amy Sonnie. 2000. 188p. illus. Alyson, paper, \$10.95 (1-55583-558-9). 305.235.

Gr. 9–12. "This is for the idea that I am only a sexual being. . . . This is for the idea that queerness only has to do with sex." Jason Roe's prose poem opens this anthology with words that get in your face and under your skin. Not all of the young writers featured here may be revolutionaries, but they all embrace a queer youth culture that is about gender, race, and class as much as it

is about sexuality. The voices are raw and sometimes unpolished, and the language is passionate, powerful, and only occasionally graphic. What holds these selections together is the writers' urgent need to define themselves in their own terms. In "Impossible Body," Lisa Lusero confesses that she purposely cut her hair so people would know she was a lesbian: "Passing for straight makes me feel invisible. And I hate that. I want to be seen clearly and explicitly for who I am. Don't assume your world is mine. Then again, don't assume it isn't." These are classic YA voices. —Randy Meyer

Voices: Poetry and Art from around the World. Ed. by Barbara Brenner. 2000. 96p. illus. index. National Geographic, \$18.95 (0-7922-7071-1). 808.81.

Gr. 6–12. Many global anthologies are loosely organized by theme. Here the arrangement is by continent. The large-size pages include poetry, much of it in translation, and beautifully reproduced full-color art from each region, with no forced connection between the pictures and the words. Many of the selections are compelling, beautiful in their particulars

Teen Graphic Novels

As Berkeley, California, librarian Francisca Goldsmith noted in her "YA Talk: Graphic Novels," the market for graphic novels has really taken off. Many of them, including Judd Winick's recent *Pedro and Me* [BKL S 1 00] and the books below, have special appeal for teen readers. For more insights into what's going on in the genre and how to start a graphic novel collection in your library, take a look at Francisca's informative article in the May 1, 1998, issue of *Booklist*. —Stephanie Zvirin

Asamiya, Kia. *Dark Angel: The Path to Destiny.* 2000. 216p. illus. CPM Comics, 250 W. 57th St., Ste. 317, New York, NY 10107, paper, \$15.95 (1-56219-827-7). 741.5.

Gr. 8–12. In this first volume of a new fantasy series from Japanese *manga* artist Asamiya (*Silent Mobius*), readers witness the physical, spiritual, and moral journey of the young swordsman Dark. Through bleak and tumultuous landscapes and weather, Dark struggles from the past into the future, aided by companions even more ethereal and supernatural than he is. The gray-washed pencil illustrations amplify the otherworldly aspects of Dark's occupation, and Dark's androgynous features, typical of *manga* heroes, offer an alternative to American-bred superheroes. The story brings to the fore a number of serious issues—perfection, cooperation, humility, and submission—and footnotes will help readers lacking sufficient cultural context to understand the phrases and symbolism. Both graphic novel enthusiasts and fantasy adventure readers will enjoy this and eagerly await the next volume. —Francisca Goldsmith

Mizuno, Ryo. *Record of Lodoss War: The Grey Witch—Birth of a New Knight.* Illus. by Yoshihiko Ochi. 2000. 224p. CPM Comics, 250 W. 57th St. Ste. 317, New York, NY 10107, \$15.95 (1-56219-928-S). 741.5.

Gr. 7–12. This second volume in the *manga* fantasy the Grey Witch Trilogy focuses on the mortal struggle between the forces

of dark and light. Goblins have taken over Lodoss in the wake of human greed, with elves such as Deedlit working to serve would-be heroes who try to mend the rifts among the gods and goddesses. This time, Parn, the hero, struggles through events both prosaic and magical to learn the identity of his father. Swordsmanhood, sorcery, and other medieval arts are worked into the plot, as are images from fairy tales. Both good and evil are personified, with the creatures embodying ethical aspects drawn evocatively, almost sweetly. As with such series, the most ardent readers will be those who got on board with the opening scenes

of what can become a long-running, many-volume tale. However, this does provide enough background to offer new graphic novel fantasy readers a taste of how text and pictures work together to create a world of action and ideas. —Francisca Goldsmith

Templeton, Ty. *Batman Gotham Adventures.* 2000. 144p. DC Comics, paper, \$15.95 (1-56389-616-8). 741.5.

Gr. 5–10. Half a dozen short stories offer both new and veteran Batman readers a healthy dose of superhero adventure and humor. In sharply shaped and dramatically shadowed style, the full-color illustrations, by Rick Burkett and others, depict Batman in both his superhero and civilian guise, as well as Robin and Catwoman and the usual bad apples, the Joker, Two-Face, the Riddler, and others. As Bob Kane originally conceived the Batman legend, these stories offer ethical issues at the heart of popular-culture-strewn plots, making them easily accessible as well as mildly thought-provoking. The New York City backdrop is as traditional as the techniques of

illustration and story development, showing vintage automobiles, mid-twentieth-century costuming, and mostly white faces. There's a lot of gun power and hard-hitting fists, but folks usually get up and run away after such contact—if they're not being held for well-deserved imprisonment. The puns flow as freely as the punches, adding literary richness. —Francisca Goldsmith

